

# NOTES ON THE CHUGÁNI AND NEIGH- BOURING TRIBES OF KAFIRISTAN.

By Colonel H. C. TANNER.

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# NOTES ON THE CHUGÁNI AND NEIGH- BOURING TRIBES OF KAFIRISTAN.\*

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As I am the only Englishman who has ever visited the Dara Nur and the country to the north, I think my notes of the people and the tract they occupy may perhaps be interesting; I therefore send you the following account of the Dara Nuri and the Chugáni, and a note or two about the Kafirs. Much of the information is new; my own personal

\* This account of his recent visit to the Chugáni country was communicated by Colonel Tanner to Mr. R. N. Cust, who read the paper to the Society, accompanied by the following prefatory remarks:—

The population of Kafiristan may perhaps amount to 100,000. They are entirely independent of the Amir of Kabul, as they have been of all Mahommedan rulers. The country is said to be called "Wamastan" by the natives. It is impregnable, and occupies a commanding position, domineering all mountain passes between the Oxus and Indus basins. It occupies the most western part of the independent Highlands, or Yaghistan, just where the chain of the Hindu Kush impinges on the extremity of the Himalaya. It caps the mountainous region of Badakhshan on the Oxus, and overlooks most of the passes at the head of the Kabul river. The people are ethnically distinct from the Afghan, Hazára, and Tajik populations.

Mountstuart Elphinstone, in his account of the kingdom of Kabul, in 1815, notices the existence of the Kafirs. He had neither visited them nor seen more than one of their tribe; he knew their geographical situation only vaguely, and little of their history. He notes that they were Pagan, neither Hindu nor Mahommedan nor Buddhist, in constant hostility to the Mahommedans, and that their numerous languages had all a near connection with Sanskrit, or, in other words, were of the Indian branch of the Aryan family. He mentions their fair complexion, and hazards, with great show of truth, the suggestion that the Kohistáni, Laghmáni or Dehgáni were of the same tribe ethnically, and the same family linguistically,

adventures during my exploration I think it better to omit from these pages.

The valley of Dara Nur, which I could never satisfy myself was called Dara-i-Nur (being generally called simply Nur by the inhabitants), is the basin of a river, which rises on the south face of Kund and flows

though they had become Mahommedan. He remarks that there is no name for the nation, and that each valley was held by a separate tribe, one of whom were called Siah Posh or Tor, from their black dress, and another Spin, from their white dress. They were wild mountaineers, but were agriculturists as well as pastoral, and far from being in a low, though a rude, state of civilisation, as they dwelt in houses, and had laws of marriage. They had many slaves, and it is specially remarked, that these were not Mahommedans, and that slavery was not cruel, but of the domestic type. He alludes to the absurd tradition that they were descendants of Macedonian soldiers left there two thousand years ago by Alexander the Great on his celebrated invasion of India. They ate the flesh of the cow, deposited their dead in coffins under the trees, and had a form of Nature-worship; in which particulars they resembled the non-Aryan races of India.

Twenty-five years later, Sir Alexander Burnes had opportunities of giving further information with regard to the Kafirs, in his 'Personal Narrative of a Journey to Kabul' (1843). He had at Kabul met many of the tribe, who had been enslaved by the Mahommedans but still remembered the language and customs of their country. He met persons, Hindu and Mahommedan, who had visited Kafiristan. He remarks, that they call themselves "Kafir," seeing no offence in the word, and looked upon all men as brothers who wore ringlets and drank wine; that grapes were in abundance in their valleys; that their appearance was totally distinct from Afghan or Kashmiri; that Mahommedans get no quarter, and never enter the country. That Hindus went as merchants and mendicants; that they sacrificed corn to their idols, and ate beef; eating their food in companies, sitting upon stools. A short vocabulary of words spoken is given, and the opinion expressed that they show an affinity to the Hindu language. Some of the people of Kohistan spoke a dialect resembling that of the Kafirs.

The Kafirs are noticed by Wood, Vigne, Wolfe, Masson, Lumsden, Raverty, and Bellew, but the information is always at second-hand. Dr. Trumpp, of Munich, while he was at Peshawur, gathered from two Kafirs, who were brought to him, some knowledge of the language, which he published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. In 1874 two Protestant missionaries made an attempt at the risk of their lives to penetrate into Kafiristan, under the idea that Europeans would be welcomed there; but one of them was sent back by the Governor of Jalálabad, and the other was stopped by the English authorities on the frontier. In fact, no European has entered Kafiristan. Dr. Leitner has made some approaches and attempts to glean information on the side of Dárdistán, and now Colonel Tanner has availed himself of the late expedition into Northern Afghanistan to make a material contribution to existing knowledge.

Considerable interest was aroused by notices such as these, which appeared in the public prints:—

"It seems probable that a part, at least, of the mystery, which has so long shrouded Kafiristan, will be cleared away, for, as stated by Mr. Blanford in his address to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Major Tanner has discovered, near Jalálabad, some relics of the old Kafir (pre-Mahommedan) rulers, and more particularly has found a subterranean palace, which has been already partially excavated.

south-east into the Kunar river. It has many villages and forts, and except at the upper end, where there are two villages of Chugáni, is inhabited entirely by the people whose vocabulary I send you. Some 10 miles from the source of the Dara Nur valley the Damench stream

He has also made inquiries about those mysterious people the inhabitants of Kafiristan, and finds, that there are at least ten dialects of the Kafir language; of these dialects, which, as might be supposed, are Aryan, he is compiling a glossary. Having heard of a tribe called Chugáni, who can muster 6000 fighting men, and are neighbours of the Kafirs, he, by aid of his interpreter, succeeded in getting two of them to visit him. He describes them as wild, ragged fellows, of pale complexions and thin features, their legs clothed with coarse goat's-hair socks, then an outer covering of goat's hair, and curious untanned shoes tied on in a cunning fashion. They assured Major Tanner that his life would be safe in their own valley, and promised to repeat their visit and bring two Lal Kafirs. 'It is with the Chugáni,' writes the Major, 'that I must enter Kafiristan, if I do it at all. They are half Kafir themselves, and though professed Mussulmans, they seem to have their sympathies more with the hereditary enemies of their co-religionists than with the Mahommedans.' "

These latter remarks tally with what has been repeated from other quarters, that these Aryan mountaineers were divided into pagans, such as the Kafirs; Mahommedans, such as the Laghmáni and Kohistáni; and Nimchah, half and half, who perhaps go as far as repeating the Mahommedan Kalám, but are in all other respects pagan.

Colonel Tanner started on his most enterprising expedition into Kafiristan alone. He accepted the invitation of certain influential Kafirs to visit them as a guest, and it was believed, and the result proved, that their faith could be relied on. They give no quarter to Mahommedans, but spare those, who like themselves are technically Kafir, or non-believers in the creed of Mahomet, which was associated in their minds with barbarous cruelty from the earliest period of the Mahommedan invasion of Afghanistan. His progress was watched with great interest, and the Royal Geographical Society, in its 'Proceedings' of 1879, pages 514 and 713, kept its readers informed as to his movements, as far as private and hasty letters permitted.

Captain Holdich, in his paper on the "Geographical Results of the Afghan Campaign," read before the Society December 13th, 1880, and published in 'Proceedings' of February 1881, page 74, notices briefly the failure of all attempts up to the present date to enter Kafiristan, as much on account of the fierce and jealous tribes which surround it, as to its own geographical position and inaccessibility. He testifies that though pushed back by the encroachments of a more powerful, because more civilised, people, and diminished in numbers by secession to Mahommedanism, the Kafirs still in the remotest possible peaks of the Hindu Kush maintain something of a national existence. It is doubtful, whether they are spread over the watershed of that range, and the weight of evidence seems against that fact, though Elphinstone's map so delineates them; but unquestionably the tribes to the south are of the same stock, such as the Nimchah, Sáfi, Dehgáni, Laghmáni on the immediate skirts, and more remotely the Kohistáni, who have all really or nominally accepted Mahommedanism for the sake of peace and respectability.

Major Biddulph, the Political Agent at Gilgit, in his volume on the 'Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh,' printed at Calcutta, 1880, makes important additions to our knowledge. During his stay at Chitral, 1878, two deputations of Siah Posh Kafirs came to visit him, and invited him to their country, but he was unable to go. He had seen and conversed with Kafirs, and with men who had visited Kafiristan, and



enters it, but the waters of the two never meet. They flow side by side about three-fourths of a mile apart for about 12 miles, and empty themselves into the Kunar river near Islámabad by different mouths, each torrent hugging closely the foot of the hills at its own side of the valley. Now, except in countries where terracing has been practised continuously for thousands of years, such unnatural topography as exists in Dara Nur, is next to impossible. The forces which were sufficient to scoop out the Dara Nur valley, in the first instance, would have kept a waterway at the lowest part, into which would have poured the drainage of the surrounding mountains; but in the Dara Nur long-continued terracing has gradually raised the centre of the valley high above the edges. The population has increased to its maximum limit, and every available inch of ground is required for cultivation; and the people, by means of terrace-walls built of ponderous boulders in the bed of the original single stream, have little by little pushed the waters out of their true course, until they run, where they are now found, in deep rocky cuttings at the very foot of the hills on either side.

The same strange spectacle of a valley containing two almost parallel streams, may be witnessed west of Jalálabad also, where the Kambu and Surkhab rivers are separated by a high artificial ridge. The waters of

learnt that the population is composed of a number of tribes, speaking a diversity of languages, though without doubt of cognate origin, and having similar customs and religion. Many of them are unable to understand each other, and they carry on intertribal warfare. From the force of circumstances, these Aryan tribes are still in the primitive state in which they were before the Christian era.

There are three main tribes, conforming to the natural divisions of the country.

- I. Rungáli or Lumgáli, who occupy the upper parts of the valleys which run down in a south-west direction; this tribe also extends to the north side of the watershed. The people of Laghmán are probably of this stock, but now Mahommedans.
- II. Waigáli, who occupy the valleys which run south-east, joining the Kunar valley at Chaghan Serai.
- III. Bushgáli, who occupy the valleys extending from further north in a south-easterly direction.

These main divisions are again subdivided into clans.

It was a great disappointment to all interested in these survivals of an ancient and unmixed race, representing the probable type of the old Aryan forefathers (from whom the great conquering races of the world, Indian, Iranian, Slavonic, Teutonic, Greek, Latin, and Keltic, have in remote ages descended), to receive the news, that Colonel Tanner was obliged to abandon his expedition, favourably commenced, on account of ill-health; however, a man of his stamp and varied acquirements and experiences did not do what he did in vain, for he played to advantage the part of "a chiel taking notes," and was good enough to forward to me the result in the shape of these interesting notes, which I have the pleasure of communicating to the Society. The purely philological portion of Colonel Tanner's letter I have reserved for the perusal of my friend Professor Trumpp, of Munich, the only person who has a scientific knowledge of the language, and it will eventually be embodied in a paper for the Royal Asiatic Society.

these two streams, highly charged with silt, have been for so many ages conducted over the terraced fields in the neighbourhood of Sultánpur Páin and to the eastward, that the surface of the cultivated tract between them has been very much raised above its original level, so that the Kambu and the Surkhab, which, if left alone, should join near Rosabad, are now strangers to each other. Sultánpur Páin, which once stood on a considerable eminence commanding the surrounding country, is now barely as high as the adjacent terraced fields, which have been gradually raised by the constant accumulation of silt. Above Sultánpur Páin there is a famous spring, venerated by Mahommedans and Hindus alike, whose clear waters are conducted on both sides of the town, and as it has not been possible for silt to rest where clear water runs, the beds of the stream have always remained in their natural channel, now two ravines or valleys, deep down below the level of the terraced tracts.

Throughout Ning Nahár,\* where man has been for so many thousands of years at work, he has in many places completely altered the aspect of nature; besides separating the streams in Dara Nur, and at Sultánpur, by a high ridge of artificial terraces, he has forced some of the torrents that come down from the Safaid Koh to flow miles out of their true course, by continually building up his strong terrace-walls in the bed of the streams. For thousands of years his flocks of goats and sheep have been busy eradicating every trace of vegetation on the uncultivated tracts, until now there is not remaining a vestige of the original herbage except grass. The depredations of goats and sheep are visible up to about 7000 feet in the Safaid Koh, below which they have trodden away all the soil and eaten out every species of tree and shrub; vegetation in that range commences only at a point beyond which goats cannot reach in a day's grazing from the villages below. In the comparatively dry countries of Asia, where the soil throughout the year is not moist, and where the roots of growing grasses do not bind it together, goats and sheep have either killed or are fast killing the mountain slopes, and rendering them as dead as the barren islands in the Red Sea.

The Damench valley, which joins the Dara Nur, has a considerable number of villages. The inhabitants (Damench) have a language of their own, allied to but not understood by their neighbours the Chugáni and Dara Nuri. They are classed as Kohistáni by the Afghans, from whom they differ much in appearance.

The Dara Nuri profess to be Tajiks, and they take great pride in the antiquity of their race; but the Afghans speak contemptuously of

\* The people of the Jalálabad plain and the adjoining country still recognise the ancient division of Ning Nahár, which they say means the nine streams. I could never exactly determine the nine rivers included, but all accounts agreed as to the following, viz. the Kabul, Kunar, Surkhab, Alingar, and Alishang. Some people gave me the minor feeders of the Kabul, which drain the Safaid Koh, such as the Chapriar, &c.

their birth, and call them Dehgáns. The Dehgáns who live away from the mountains—for instance, in the Jalálabad plain—talk Pushtu, but it is not improbable that they once used the language of their brethren to the north of the Kabul river. They are probably the remains of the inhabitants who preceded the Pathans, and were Kafirs before Buddhism was introduced. That some of the existing tribes of Kafirs were once inhabitants of the Jalálabad plain is admitted by many Afghans and Dara Nuri, and Káma, Gamberi, and other tracts, were held in part by Kafirs till a comparatively recent time. Into the latter plain no less than two “Kafir Daras” empty themselves; and whilst I was at Jinjapur, in Dara Nur, I saw, at about a couple of miles distance, a Kafir village, with the walls still so perfect that I supposed it to be inhabited. To give some idea of the loss of area suffered by the Kafirs of late years, I may mention that, when they were driven out of Dara Nur, they found no resting-place until they reached the northern face of the Rám Kund range, at least four marches off in a direct line; but more of this further on.

The language of the Dara Nuri is almost identical with that of their neighbours on the plain of Laghmán. My list of words is very imperfect; I had intended to have made it complete, but when I learnt from the late Mr. Jenkins, who was killed with Major Cavagnari at Kabul, that he was engaged on the same language, I gave it up. Mr. Jenkins was an accomplished linguist, and he made a most complete grammar and vocabulary of Laghmáni; but from inquiries I have made I learn that all his papers were destroyed in the Bála Hissár, and I doubt if any copy of his Laghmáni studies reached England. I am on this account induced to send you the accompanying meagre list of words used by the people of Dara Nur.

In appearance the Dara Nuri differ little from the Afghans. Their features are softer, and they are more trustworthy and less given to fanatical outbreaks than the Pathans; and though in Dara Nur they continually fight amongst themselves, yet they have never given us trouble in Afghanistan. Government should make a recruiting-ground of their country, where there are hundreds of fine manly fellows who would be only too glad to join our army if sufficient inducements were held out.

The forts of Dara Nur are similar to those of the Jalálabad plain, and their interior arrangement is the same. In two, where I remained for several days, the women went about but little concerned at my presence, and showed far less anxiety than is exhibited by the Afghans to hide their faces.

In the room where I lived for some time, I was much struck by two carved wooden almiras from the Chugáni country, which contained all the family lungies and spare carpets, &c. The people still retain the custom of sitting on stools, and, as a rule, are not at home when squatting



on the ground. Among the Kohistáni and Kafirs, stools are in general use, every house having sufficient numbers both for the family and for guests.

The climate of that part of the Kunar river about Shewa or Khewa (Kél of the Dara Nuri) is hot in summer, for it has an altitude of only 2000 feet, but the heads of the Nur and Damench valleys have sufficient altitude to give them a good climate. The scenery above Jinjapur is very fine; the lower slopes of the hills are not, as they are lower down, bare, and the spurs of Kund, high overhead, are clothed with a dense forest of pine and fir. Above the forests are lofty snow-peaks and craggy spurs. Backing Damench and the western feeders of the Nur Dara, and enclosing them as with an amphitheatre, there rises an enormous wall of granite, which connects Kashmund, 10,000 feet, with Kund, 14,000 feet. At the foot of this huge scarp lies a chaos of most mighty nodules of granite, and below the cliff, amongst the great masses of fallen rock, grow *Pinus excelsa* and oak, looking mere pigmies amongst the boulders.

But the description of the upper slopes of Kund pertains properly to the account I shall now give of the Chugáni tribe, who occupy the upper end of all the valleys that drain the Rám Kund mountains. Otherwise, I should like to go on and say a good deal more about boulders; and while I am about it I may as well mention one that lies back from a hamlet in Shulut, which is so big that there is a house built in a fault or crack running across its face. Another pebble lies athwart the village, and covers the whole of the houses from that side.

An account of the highly interesting people called the Chugáni, of their beautiful mountains and picturesque Kashmir-like valleys, of their costumes, their mode of life, and their language, would fill a volume were I sufficiently well acquainted with them; but as I was only a fortnight amongst them, and the greater part of that time ill with fever, the sketch I can give must needs be of the very slightest description.

As to locality, they live, as stated, in the highest habitable parts of the Kund range. To the south of them dwell the Damench tribe, and as the boundaries of their grazing-grounds march together, they live nearly always in a state of feud with each other. The east and the west of Chugánistan\* are hedged in by the powerful race of Sáfi. They are the hereditary and inveterate enemies of the Chugáni, and peace is seldom known between them. At the time of harvest they observe an armed peace, but at all other times there is war. The Sáfi are the more numerous, and have richer and broader arable tracts than the Chugáni who have cultivated every available square yard of hillside that will bear a terrace-wall, and there is no room for an increase of population; but with the Sáfis it is different; the broader parts of their valleys are still to a certain extent capable of extended cultivation. The result

\* The Chugáni country is thus called by the Dara Nuri.

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is, that the Sáfi are gradually overpowering the Chugáni. Already are the villages of several of the valleys of Kund subject to the yoke of the Sáfi, and now the only really independent Chugáni are those who hold the head of Nur Dara, Shulut, and the head of the Mázár Dara, or Aret. The distribution of the tribe is here given:—

	Locality.	Name of Village.	No. of Houses.	
Drain into the Kunar river.	Nur Dara .. ..	Kandak .. ..	300	Call themselves the Aret Chugáni.
	" .. ..	Shemál .. ..	200	
	Shulut Dara .. ..	Shulut (4 villages) .. ..	200	
	Mázár Dara .. ..	Aret (and many hamlets) .. ..	1200	Aret Chugáni.
	" .. ..	Sumásht .. ..	300	
	Damench Dara .. ..	Sigal .. ..	400	
	Chowki Dara .. ..	Chilás .. ..	400	
Drain into Laghmán.	Pech Dara .. ..	Kordar or Chugali (and others) .. ..	100	Talk Dehgáni or Laghmáni.
	Pariana Dara .. ..	Pariana .. ..	1000	
	Chitalas Dara .. ..	Chitala .. ..	600	
Total .. ..			4700 houses.	
			Or, say, 23,500 souls.	

I was informed of others not named here who claim to be Chugáni, and who talk a separate language, but I could not ascertain the localities they occupy.

Judging from what I saw of the Mázár and Shulut valleys, I should say that the numbers given me are not overstated. The Chugáni of Pariana and Chitala on the Laghmán side of Kund talk Dehgano, i. e. Laghmáni; but the remainder talk their own tongue, which is nearly allied to that of Nur Dara. The two languages would probably have more resemblance to each other when reduced to writing, but the two tribes cannot converse without an interpreter.

The appearance of a Chugáni is quite different from that of the Afghan or of the Dara Nuri; he is shorter in stature, and has softer and more pleasing features. He affects dark clothes like a tribe of Dárds, the Kolai, in the Indus valley. The headdress of the poorer people is a skull cap, or kind of brown wideawake with a very narrow brim, round which the more prosperous ones bind a dark indigo-dyed pugri. The coat is short, either of quilted indigo-coloured cotton, or of brown blanket-like material. Some wear goatskin coats. The trowsers of those who live where cotton goods are procurable are of that material, but the others have short ones of brown blanket stuff, reaching a little below the knee; black knitted goat's-hair leggings tightly encase the leg from the knee down to the ankle, and when travelling in the snow, thick goat's-hair socks are added. The boots are by far the most picturesque and becoming that I have seen anywhere in the mountains of the East. The round-toed sole and upper leather are neatly joined by a nicely plaited band. Round the instep, and passing behind the tendon Achilles is a strip of embroidery in colours, and above that a high legging of markhor's skin with the fur inside, opening in front, and bound round with a thong. The upper part of the legging is turned



down and shows a band of fur a little below the calf. This boot may be found in a rudimentary state on the borders of Kashmir, in Dárdistán, and in Badakhshan and other places, but the Dárds of Chilás and Gilgit wear no boots, and use long strips of skin only, which they wind round and round the foot and up the leg, leaving the toe and heel bare. Round the waist the Chugáni wears a leathern belt into which he invariably thrusts a Kafir knife. Over his shoulder he carries a neatly made quiver with a well-fitting cover,\* containing about a dozen arrows of reed, with three barbs and sharply pointed. The bow is of wood and the string of gut. Those Chugáni, who had bows and arrows, were very poor, but it is not unlikely, that the richer ones, who live far away from the influences of the Afghans, may use bows of horn similar to those of parts of Dárdistán; and though I saw no such bow at Aret, yet this seems an appropriate place for the description of one in general use in the mountain tracts of the Indus basin; for instance, in Bashkár Hunza (Kanjut), Swat, &c., where the warrior, as described by Homer, to this day ascends to the cliffs, and after smiting a goat with "honours of sixteen palms," carefully joins the horns and fashions them to a weapon identical in every respect with that used thousands of years ago by Homer's Pandarus. And in introducing Homer's name, I must again refer to the costume of the Chugáni, and I regret to say to the much-worn subject of their boots; for when the Aret village cobbler came to make shoes for me and my party, to enable us to travel over the snows of Kund, he produced a veritable last, and fitted the boots thereon with wedges. But the preparation of the leather was the interesting part of the performance. A piece of bull's hide was produced, and after being smeared with some lubricator, Homer's five brawny carriers tugged at it with all their might for an hour, and the Homeric leather thus produced lasted my surveyor four months' hard walking over the stony mountains of Gilgit and Ponyál, where any other leather would have gone to pieces in a fortnight.

The Chugáni are Suni, and most devout and attentive to their religious duties, and I have seen their women engaged in prayer; but they are the only Mahommedans I know who allow to the weaker sex perfect and unconstrained freedom. Young and old, married or single, the women go about amongst the men as they do in Europe, and without any of the false modesty of the ordinary Indian or Afghan female. They used to approach me and examine my watch and other things. Mrs. Azim Khan and her daughters used to ask me every morning how I fared, and became at last quite friendly. In one other place only have I been allowed to converse without restraint with the women, and that was in a remote and wild part of the Brahui country, where mollahs

\* Most of the Chugáni of Aret have guns, but at Kordar and other remote Chugáni towns firearms are rarer.

were unknown, and the tenets of the Prophet but imperfectly understood. At one Brahui hut where I was resting, my host ordered his young wife to sew up a rent in my coat, and she readily obeyed.

The dress of the Chugáni women is most tasteful, and the women themselves are many of them very pretty. The wardrobe of the woman of Dárdistán consists of a shapeless and dirty sack, extending from her neck to her feet; and on to her head she flings, anyhow, another equally shapeless and dirty bag, her only other covering being a thick coat of crusted dirt; but the Chugáni young lady takes a pride in her appearance. She wears an embroidered coloured skull cap, with a long tail reaching to her waist, ornamented over the forehead and down the back with coins, beads, and shells. The hair is cut in a fringe across the forehead, as amongst our own young people, the back hair being gathered into plaits; over her shoulders she wears a dark-coloured embroidered kind of waistcoat, and over that a coatlet of some dark colour extending below the knee, and with fairly tight sleeves. Her trowsers, which are sufficiently well fitting, are often of some bright colour and quilted. Round her neck are several rows of large beads, the necklaces being tight, and of brightly contrasting colours. Suspended from her neck and extending across her chest are one or more large semicircular silver ornaments, similar to those I have seen for sale at Jalálabad, and also in the central Himalaya, the name of which I forget. A leather belt round the waist completes the costume. Married women wear a pugri over the skull cap, and do not cut the hair into a fringe. While I was at Aret, the whole of the young ladies of the household of Azim Khan, my host and protector, came out in brand-new clothes, and very pretty they looked. Some 500 feet below the house there was a grove of magnificent walnut-trees, under the shade of which I passed many pleasant hours. A clear foaming mountain-torrent bounded over the granite boulders at my feet, and around rose the neat terraces of green waving wheat. Tiny cascades sparkled and splashed down the rocks that cropped out of the steep mountain slopes, ferns peeped out of the dark shady crevices, and English ivy clung to the lichen and moss grown rocks, and tried to hide them with its dark green mantle. The notes of singing birds filled the air, and down the winding mountain path used sometimes to come troops of merry Chugáni girls, with their nicely made kilta at their backs. Miss Azim Khan, aged 15, with her Grecian-looking water-vessel strapped into her kilta, was a pleasant sight to look upon. The women and children seemed always to be busy, and never out of sorts, and used to attend pretty constantly to the field work, whilst they left the household duties to the master of the house. To him—a stingy, covetous, grasping man, fell the distribution of the food to all the members of the household and guests; he had his eye on every piece of cheese and meat eaten. His idea of performing the duty of the host



was to make me pay exorbitantly for all food consumed in his establishment while I was with him. He was twitted one day by the Dara Nuri who accompanied me to Aret, for his meanness in not giving me a *ziáfat* or entertainment, so he just asked me for three rupees, and then killed a goat in my honour. The Chugáni all helped at cutting up the carcase, and then to my astonishment ate at least half of it in a perfectly raw state, without putting it even near the fire. The remainder was boiled in a big pot, and I received my share.

The small, straight-backed, Kerry-looking cows of the Chugáni give quantities of milk, the whole of which is daily converted into cheese. Butter is not used, or if so only to a limited extent. Black cows, though not so well bred as those of Aret, prevail throughout Dárdistán, and here, where I write these notes, overlooking the Indus, they are at this moment feeding round my tent. As far as I could learn, cows are the only money known in Chugánistan. A man will give three cows for a black cotton pugri with a coloured silk edging. There are no shops and no banias, salt, lungies, guns, &c., being obtained by barter at the larger towns in the Nur Dara. Fines of so many cows are inflicted by a bench of the three chief Maliks of Aret, on any of the tribe who may infringe the very simple code of Chugáni laws. One of the men who accompanied me back to Dara Nur from Aret, was found to have stolen a pugri from a friendly fort where I was staying. He was followed and overtaken, his Kafir knife was taken from him, and I was told that Azim Khan, the chief Malik, would be fined twenty cows for this offence against the Dara Nuri.

The view from the Utchatic Gali Pass (7300 feet) which overlooks the Aret valley, is most extensive, and in one direction impressive. Two thousand feet below the spectator is the chief town, clinging to the steep side of the mountain opposite. For miles up the valley are stretches of carefully made terraces, and on the crests of the spurs which come down from Kund, are situated numerous hamlets. Among the wheat-fields are prettily-built isolated houses, and sometimes just peeping out from the dense foliage of the walnut groves. Beyond the wheat-fields and behind the most distant of the hamlets are the slopes of Kund, black with pine forest, and higher up, where the vegetation is less continuous, green grassy knolls and wild craggy peaks begin to show amidst the pine woods. Above this is a belt bare of all vegetation except the creeping juniper, and topping the whole, and almost lost amidst the clouds, are the peaks and snow-fields of Rám Kund, or, as it is called by the Kafirs, "*San*," "the lofty."

Turning eastwards, and below you some 5000 feet, winds the rich valley of the Kunar river, with its forts and walled towns, backed up by a brown range, the highest point of which is Elazai, 9000 feet, above the crests of which the inhospitable barren-looking country of the Bájouri and the Men of Dir stretches away into the remote distance. In the south,

far off in the hazy brown mists of Afghanistan, is the Jalálabad plain, seen across the spurs of Kund and Kashmund mountains, the chief streams which water the plain and the cultivated strips along their edges being just discernible, and with my telescope I could dimly make out the minute white line of the tents of our army at Jalálabad. This view is backed up by the long, serrated, snowy line of the Safaid Koh, which is so distant that it looks as if it were floating off into space, the lower parts of the mountains being of the same colour as the sky above.

The vegetation of the range whence these views were obtained is rich, and like that of the Murree hills. *Pinus excelsa*, she-oak, holly-oak, olive, and pomegranate grew in profusion; and higher up, the black foliage, either of the straight so-called silver pine, or of *Abies Webbiana* or *Smithiana*, clothed the mountain sides. I could see no birds. Differing in this respect from the Safaid Koh, there were none of the edible pine nor deodars, and though large quantities of deodar timber are floated down the Kunar river to Peshawur, I could not detect any, even on the most distant spurs.

Throughout the Aret and Shulub valleys there is not a single fort or tower of defence. Though the hated Sáfi live so near them as at Islámabad, only three miles down the valley, yet the country is so steep and rugged, that the Chugáni say it is a strong fortress in itself, and they always keep so much on the *qui vive* that they do not require to hedge themselves in behind towers and walls as do the Afghans. These people never leave their pleasant mountain homes for the hateful stony plains, and I was the first to point out to Azim Khan the position of the chief places in the Jalálabad plain. To Jalálabad he had been only once in his life, and that was on the occasion of his visit to me, and that after my friends in the Nur Dara had given hostages for his safety.

During my abode with Azim Khan, I lived in his suburban house, which was about half a mile below the chief village. At night the women and children used to retire to their house in the town, but the men and Azim Khan himself used to remain with me. To the town of Aret I was taken once only, and then to see a sick man, and I must say that it is one of the most remarkable collection of houses I have ever seen. As stated, it is built on the face of a very steep slope, and the houses, of which there must be 600, are arranged in terraces one above another. From the roof of one of the lower ones I gazed with astonishment at a vast amphitheatre of carved wood—at thousands of carved verandah posts, and at tens of thousands of carved panels, with which the upper story of each house is constructed. These panels, which are arranged similarly to the shutters of Indian shops, are ornamented with every conceivable variety of carved pattern. The carving completely covered the woodwork of the upper story of every house. The lower story is of



stone and wood, and double the extent of the upper, and this allows an open roof space on which the inhabitants mostly pass their time in fine weather. One house in the upper part of the town was nearly new, and of a light mahogany colour, but the woodwork of the others (pine) was as black as bog oak, and the inside of the one I visited blacker if possible. The furniture consisted of cots (*kát*), stools (*stá*), earthen vessels with Grecian-looking ears, and cheese-making utensils. Agricultural implements, such as shovels of wood, rakes, &c., were stuck in between the blackened rafters of the ceiling. On the whole, it was a superior habitation to those enjoyed by most Indians. Below the town I passed the graveyard, or a portion of it, for cultivated land is so valuable, that the graves are scattered about amongst the rocks in any spot which is not too steep to bear them. The graves have built stone walls and are covered in with slabs, the body not being allowed to come in contact with the surrounding earth. Highly ornamented and fantastically carved head and foot posts stood at the ends of the graves, and one, which was new, had remarkable carved posts painted red, with a row of pegs neatly inserted at the back of each, the number of pegs (nineteen in this case) corresponding with the number, chiefly of Sáfi, the deceased Chugáni had killed during his lifetime.

On a knoll, below the town, I was shown the shrine of "Bibi," the patron saint of the Chugáni. "The lady" was a woman hero who, in one of the great fights with the Sáfi, assumed the form of a snake. During the battle she was struck with a sword, and from the wound there poured, not blood, but milk. From this miracle it became evident to the Sáfis that it was no ordinary serpent they had killed, so they took the body, and buried it down the valley at their own town of Islámabad. When the Chugáni became aware of their loss, they made a great effort to recover the body of the snake, and after a great encounter became possessed of it again, bringing it back to the place where the tomb now stands; thus it happens that at this time there are two ziarats or shrines dedicated to Bibi the lady—one at Islámabad and one at Aret. It is said that the spirit of the woman hero is still present in the fights with the Sáfi, and that to this day she aids the Chugáni in battle. This "Bibi" can be no other than our friend Nagobai in another guise. In parts of Dárdistán, rock-gods called Nagobai may still be seen, and even amongst the bigoted Afghans, stories of snake demons are still told, notably at Bosawal, on the Kabul river, where you are informed that the utter barrenness of the Markuh (snake hill) and Bedaulat (worthless) is due to the burning of the body of a great snake which used to infest that part of the country. A holy man of Batikol (whose name I now forget), on hearing of the depredations of the monstrous reptile, went out against it, and after a desperate fight overcame it. On death overtaking the snake, it was immediately consumed by flames, and the heat was so great that the surrounding hills were burnt up, and have remained barren

ever since. The shrine of the victorious saint is still pointed out at Batikol, and is considered a place of great sanctity.

During my stay at Azim Khan's, many Chugáni from the surrounding villages came to see me, my watch, my telescope, and my breech-loading rifle. They were much interested also in my prismatic compass, and I always had to show these pious Mahommedans the true direction of Mecca. Amongst those who came were two from Kordar, who walked in with their bows in their hands, their quivers over their shoulders, and their foreheads bound round with a piece of broad black tape; one was a pleasant-looking young fellow, with light hair, ruddy cheeks, and brown eyes, and he told me much about the Sanu\* Kafirs, his next-door neighbours; and what little information I gleaned about them I may as well now relate. There is much friendship and some traffic carried on between the Kordar Chugáni and the Sanu Kafirs, and the Kordari all talk the language of the Sanu fluently.

The little-known people whom the surrounding Afghans are pleased to call Kafirs, are now confined to a tract bounded on the north and north-west by the Hindu Kush, to the east by the Hindu Raj, and to the south and south-west by the Kund range and by Laghmán. The tribes are very numerous, and I never found two people who agreed in the names of four out of five of them. Some of the ideas the Chugáni entertain of the Kafirs, I may as well set down here in the language of the latter people as near as I have been able to pick it up.

Kafirawa mala weri san,†		kam mala san oru oru	
Kafirland in many languages there are, tribes many there are (with) different			
jibasi.	Katawa Guruwa san.	Parunawa tupaka ne si.	Madani mats (mas)
tongues.	The Katawas are riders.	The Páruns guns have not.	With clubs men they
lán.	Majgali pai san,	tupaki san tupchi san.	Shikari mats san,
kill.	The Majgalis are beautiful, have guns (and) are shot. (They) are Shikari men,		
maladin mala peshtin.	Sowa kata maisten Wáma san.		Kota Wáma,
very active (and) very swift.	Than all the nicest are the Wámas. Than the Wámas,		
distu Katawá san.	Nishai da Wáma da sanusta san.		
the chief are the Katawas. The Nishars than (?) the Wámas are fairer.			

Some day, perhaps, we may learn the position of the tract occupied by the great tribe of Katawa, which is sufficiently open and level to admit of those people becoming good horsemen, such as they are reputed to be by the surrounding tribes. Perhaps they may live in a Pamir-like country on the southern slopes of the Hindu Kush. I believe they are the Katora of Burnes. They live beyond the Sanu, and between the two tribes is a high range. They live in a chronic state of warfare with each other, and talk different languages. "In the country of the Katawas is Palus, the highest of mountains," which would indicate a

\* The n of Sanu is very nasal.

† Pronounced half like sin, and half like san.



peak of the Hindu Kush, perhaps. Where, again, are the Párun, who have not yet got beyond the use of the clubs in battle?

The Sanu, who are called by the surrounding tribes the Wáma, or Lal Kafirs, number some five or six hundred houses, and live at the upper end of the Pech Dara. They are described as a merry lot, given much to dancing, singing, music, and wine-bibbing. At their meals, they sit in a circle, eating sedately and with dignity; the silver wine goblet, placed on a stand conveniently near, being from time to time passed round among the company. The Sanu shake hands in the English fashion. They make all the knives worn by the Chugáni, and like them wear dark clothes. The dress of the women, who are handsome, is looser than that of their neighbours, and they tie up the hair with a silver band. Long, massive silver chains, presented by the tribe, are worn over the shoulders of warriors who have deserved well of their class. The Hazar Malik, or priest, whose office is hereditary, is the only person allowed to enter the places of worship. As far as I could ascertain, the religion is simple. Men call on their gods for aid in battle, vowing offerings to them if they are successful in the fight; and these offerings—sometimes spoil from the enemy, and sometimes such things as silver goblets and other vessels—are stored up in the temples. It is said, with what truth I know not, that in the temples are the accumulated offerings of hundreds of years; in which case veritable museums of old curiosities must they be.

The general term for the deity is Khudáe, but there are gods such as Deogán, Thákur, Indrá, Sheojee, and many others. The Chugáni, who, of course, had seen only the outside of the temple of Deogán at Sanu Glam—for had they been caught entering it they would have been cast down from a cliff—stated that the building was hung about with bright-coloured cloths and variously ornamented, and that Deogán was a carved wooden image of a fierce-looking being, sitting on a stool, making a horrible grimace with his tongue between his teeth, and drawing his club or sword from behind his shoulders ready for striking. The god was also armed with a knife and a gun, and his eyes were picked out with some bright colour or with gold leaf, “like life.”

The Sanu do not bury their dead, but after placing them in wooden coffins, store them away in caves in the mountains, i. e. place them in natural mausoleums.

The Sanu sent me several warm invitations to visit them—in fact, they seemed just as anxious for me to reach their country as I myself was to go; and the day I was carried out of Aret, so ill as to have to be lashed on to a couple of poles like a cross—on that very day, but after I left, a deputation from the Sanu tribe entered the place, having come to escort me back to their town of Sanu Glam, and thus I never met the Kafirs face to face.

In case any of my countrymen should manage to reach Aret, and

have an opportunity of proceeding on to the Sanu, I give in the language of that race the different stages from Aret.

Virsuk gandal si.	Rustori maral	Sánawa	oik.	Dvas maral
The road is bad. The first stage of Sán (Kund) on one side. The second day's				
pántere	Digalata si.	Trewas pántere	Sirata (or Sirtai)	dingalamash.
journey beyond Sán at Digal is. Three days after at Sir we shall arrive.				
Satawas	pántere	Kordar dingalamash.	Ponchwas	pántere Sanu Glam dinga-
Four days after (at) Kordar we shall arrive. Five days after at Sanu village we				
lamash.	Dronak pa maral	si.		
shall arrive. Dronak half a stage—half-way—is.				

There is said to be another route to Sanu Glam, which leads over the Lendalam (?) Pass through the village of Palas at the head of the Chowki Dara.

The *proper* road to Kafiristan from Jalálabad would be through Tregarhi in Laghmán, up the Alingar river, and here would be no mountains to cross. At Tregarhi Kafiristan was staring us in the face two marches off, but the tribes intervening would have to be conciliated before an entry that way could be made.

The Kafirs are continually being encroached on by the surrounding Afghans, except from the north, where the Hindu Kush seems a sufficient protection. Raids on a large scale are constantly made on them, partly to wrest from them their land, partly to secure their women as slaves, and partly by fanatical Mahommedans on religious grounds. At Tregarhi (or Tergarhi) in Laghmán, a man who had joined in a great raid, made some years previously, informed me that when the Gházis, many thousands in number, arrived at the Kafir frontier, near the head of the Alingar river, they were set upon by a small band of Kafirs under a famous leader named Ladria, and ignominiously put to flight. Many Afghans were slain, and a terrific storm which came on at the time wetted the powder of the firelocks, and rendered the rout complete, and the discomfited Gházi never stopped their flight till they had got safely back to their own homes. During the life of Ladria the encroachments of the Pathans on the Kafirs in that direction were much checked. He eventually fell a victim to Afghan treachery. Major Biddulph mentions that towards the east the ruler of Chitral has continually warred on the Bashgáli Kafirs, and how some have been converted by force to Mahommedanism, and how others have been made to pay tribute. This chief derives a considerable revenue from the money he obtains from the sale of the Kafir prisoners, male and female, whom he takes either in war or by treachery. The rapidly diminishing Kafirs are also preyed on from the direction of Chápar Serai, whence come upon them hordes of Momands, Sáfi, and others, to plunder their lands and houses, and to tear from them their wives and daughters.

One would have supposed that the first act of the English in Afghanistan would have been to seek the friendship of our natural

allies, the Kafirs, so as to have played them off against our numerous enemies in the Laghmán and Tagáo valley; but this, practicable as it seems to be to an outsider like myself, has never been done. Burnes, in the first Afghan war, turned a cold shoulder to "our cousins," as they called themselves, and they returned to their valleys impressed only by our hauteur and pride. During the present campaign, the existence of thousands of hardy mountaineers, inured to war and hardship, and who, I have no doubt, would gladly help in paying off old scores against the Mahommedans, has been ignored.

Before I close this note I should mention one or two things respecting the Chugáni that I had forgotten. They state that they originally came from a village in Kashgar to Kordar, in the Pech Dara, and then, as their numbers increased, they came further south and formed the Aret settlement. In the Dara Nur and neighbourhood there are, at different places, large stones with ancient writing engraved on them, notably near Kalátik ("little fort"), near the shrine of Khoja Kambar Baba, at the edge of the Dasht-i-Gamberi, and at Shulut, on one of the boulders below the village in the ravine. None of these I saw, nor the remains at Islámabad, or at Bimbakot, the reputed capital of the Hindu Bim Raja, which is also in Dara Nur.

On the summit of Kund (Amrit or Rám Kund), there is a small lake, and on its shores still rest the remains (petrified) of Noah's Ark. In the plain of Laghmán below is the tomb of Lamech, Noah's father. In Nur Dara, or the valley of Noah, is Nurlám, or the town of Noah. At the mouth of the Mázár Dara is Nur Gal; and lastly, I may mention that the Chugáni who helped me much with my Kafir vocabulary was named Hazrat Nur, or the prophet Noah himself.

I found an exact representation of the Kafir knife in bas-relief on a figure in the enclosure of one of the Topes of ancient Hada, which I opened. At the same place I dug up a number of small well-executed pictures from the life of Buddha, in limestone; some of the tablets were of battle scenes, and one figure brandished in his hand the short square-headed sword now used in Nepál. A similar sword, I was informed by an armourer of Jalálabad, had passed through his hands to be cleaned and sharpened; it was being sent as a present from some tribe of Kafirs to Amir Shere Ali, at Kabul.

I have several times made use of the word Dárdistán, not because I am certain that such a country actually exists, but because it has been used by others before me, and is convenient. I don't know how Major Biddulph or Dr. Leitner employ the term, nor do I know the meaning the latter assigns to it. Drew, in his 'Kashmir and Jummoo,' and others, employ it without giving an explanation of its origin. What I have learnt from personal inquiry is this: that the people of Kashmir vaguely call the mountain region to their north-west Dárdistán, and the Gurairi and Astori call it Dáristán, and I met an old man in Kashmir who said



his ancestors originally came from Dárad; and Dr. Scully, of Gilgit, informed me that he had met natives, who talked of the Dárd language. Now, in the extreme west of the so-called Dárdistán the Laghmáni and the Dara Nuri call a mountain\* "Dár," and the Shins † of the extreme east of the region call it the same. Dáristán is then nothing more than Kohistán, or Highlands, and I believe the Dárdistán of the Kashmiri is a corruption of this word; but I have never been successful in finding any one who could say that he had been to Dárdistán, or had seen it, or had met anybody from that mythical country; but the term is convenient, and should, I think, be generally adopted, and I will now try and point out what I consider should be the limits of the tract, for it is too late to change it whether it has been rightly or wrongly adopted by others. As Dárds, then, I would first and foremost put the Shins, as being those originally called Dárds, and as being perhaps the most numerous of the (so-called) Dárd group. After the Shins come the Yashkani and Koli who occupy that part of the Indus and its tributaries between the Chilás country and that of the Pathans lower down. Now, travelling in a westerly direction, come the Bashkári, with their curious salutation of "Badbadia," "You are welcome." Then the Káshkári, with Chitral as their capital. South-west of Bashkár and south of Káshkár come the Men of Dir and Armar and the Panjkora region, but of them I know nothing, and hope soon to learn from Major Biddulph's report now issuing from the press. West of the last-named people are the numerous tribes of Kafiristan; and lastly come, to the extreme west, the Tajiks of Laghmán and Nur Dara, the Daménchi, and the Chugáni.

There are also other numerous tribes who are subdivisions of those here given, and who are mentioned in Major Biddulph's report. I dare say I shall make some people faint at my temerity in calling the Tajiks of Laghmán and Dara Nur Dárds, but what is to be done? Their language is so closely allied to those of the Dárd languages already given to the public, that for convenience sake they should all be lumped together in one great group.

But the christening by an arbitrary name of an extensive and important region like this so-called Dárdistán, can never perfectly succeed, and I regret it in this instance, for the languages of the country are so similar to each other and mingle so imperceptibly one with another, that they should be treated as one family group. The difficulty is to define the limits. This is already done to the north-east, where the non-Aryan (Turanian) languages come in, but elsewhere it is different.

\* The difficulty is that the word for ridge of the mountain, as used in the Panjáb Hills, is *dhára*, not *dár*, and Dard is unquestionably *darada*—both Sanskrit words.—R. N. C.

† Pronounced Shing, with the *ng* very nasal. The country round Chilás is called by the people to the east Shingyaik, or Shingaik, which literally means Shing yághi, or the independent Shings.

To the east lies Kashmir, and why should this really Dárd tongue be excluded from the list? To the far south, and separated from the Dárds by a band of Pushtu-speaking people, we find the Panjábi, and below them the Sindhi, whose country has been formed from the washings of the mountains of the Dárd races, and whose language is so Dárd-like that one might almost fancy that Aba Sin, the Indus, had brought it down along with the silt.

On the termination of the paper,

Colonel H. YULE said that Kafiristan was a subject on which, as it appeared to him, one man had about as much right to speak as another, because, as Mr. Cust had rightly stated, no European had ever been there. Ever since he had read Burnes's *Travels*—more than forty years ago—he had felt a great curiosity to know the mysteries of that country; but, on the other hand, he believed that when that region should have become thoroughly known, the time would have arrived for the Geographical Society to close its doors, for its work would then be pretty well concluded. Kafiristan was one of those few knots of mystery which now remained to afford perpetual enjoyment in seeking to disentangle it. The upper part of the country must in all probability be the highest and most difficult portion of the Hindu Kush, as might be judged from the fact of its never having been penetrated by any army, so far as was at present known. To the west of it there was a great series of passes, many of which had been crossed, terminating in the Khawak Pass, crossed by Captain Wood forty years ago, and, as Sir Henry Rawlinson some time ago mentioned, by the great Timour on his expedition to India. Afterwards Timour made an incursion into the Kafir country, and committed great slaughter among the people. The account of his campaign, which was translated in the third volume of Elliot's *Historians of India*, was exceedingly interesting and striking, but it was impossible to follow the geography. The great king had himself to embark in a basket, and he slid down the snow slopes, as he described in his memoirs; the narrative, indeed, reminded one of Napoleon's great passage of the Simplon, only greater difficulties were encountered. On the east of Kafiristan there were passes leading into Badakhshan from Chitral, and these had been crossed by the pundits, havildars, and other travellers sent out by the Survey Department of India; but with regard to the passes along the district, 150 miles in length, intervening between those he had mentioned, absolutely nothing was known. Of late years fragments of the languages of the various tribes along the frontier had been picked up, all evidently belonging to the same stock, and that the same as our own. By referring to some of the works which had lately been published, including those by Major Biddulph and Dr. Leitner, ten or twelve dialects might be compared, and it would be found that the numerals were almost exactly the same as the Sanskrit, which were, in fact, fundamentally the same as those used by ourselves. The name "Kafirs" was, of course, no national name, being merely the Mahomedan word for an unbeliever. When Vasco da Gama first arrived in India, he collected from the people he met at Calicut a great many notices of the nations and countries further east. In his narrative he mentioned that Pegu was inhabited by Christians, and that Sumatra was a great island also inhabited by Christians. Evidently the fact was that his informers were Mahomedans, and told him "those countries are inhabited by Kafirs, and you are Kafirs," and Vasco da Gama therefore took it for granted that they were Christians. The story of their being descended from the Greeks was a curious one, and its origin had not yet been thoroughly investigated. He had referred to Elphinstone's book to see if any account of it was given there,

and he was not sure that it did not arise from a mistake. Elphinstone quoted Rennel, who again quoted Abu'l Fazl, the Mahommedan writer in the time of Akbar, as stating that there was a tribe in the neighbourhood of Bájour who were said to be descended from the soldiers of Alexander, but those passages did not apparently identify those people with the Kafirs. When Elphinstone began to make inquiries at Peshawur, he heard about the Kafirs and their fair hair, &c., and assumed that the report of the Mahommedan author referred to them. He (Colonel Yule) was not quite certain, but that appeared to be the foundation on which the account rested. Then when people began to inquire further there were those curious coincidences about blue eyes (though even that had been disputed), and about their sitting on chairs and drinking wine, all of which were European characteristics. It was curious to notice that in Colonel Tanner's vocabulary of the dialect of the Dara Nuri, which was no doubt of the same class as that of the Kafirs, "we" and "you" were represented by *hama* and *hemo*, which were certainly very like the Greek *ἡμεῖς* and *ὑμεῖς*. But the similarity, of course, could be traced through the Sanskrit. He fancied the Kafirs were the remains of a nation of the same race as the Hindus, which, as the Mahommedans had advanced, had been pressed in upon the mountains, and probably there might be a considerable variety of tribes, though the dialects showed essentially the same Aryan and Indian character. Perhaps they formerly extended to the borders of Kashmir, but gradually, as the Afghans encroached, they had become concentrated in the most inaccessible part of the country. The oldest notice of the district with which he was acquainted, with the exception of that by Timour, was by the Jesuit traveller Benedict Goes, who, in 1604 or 1605, travelled that way, trying to get to Cathay. He mentioned that when he arrived between Peshawur and Jalálabad he heard of a country to the north called "Capperstam," in which there were a people who were very hostile to Mahommedans, who made and drank wine, had temples, and dressed in black garments; in fact, in a few lines he gave substantially almost all the facts, with the exception of those relating to the language, which were known at the present day.

Mr. DELMAR MORGAN said that when he was travelling in Central Asia last summer, he met a Russian officer who had visited Badakhshan and seen some of the Siah Posh Kafirs. He described them as a fair people, of distinct Aryan type, small in stature, but well-built and very warlike, constantly fighting with the Afghans or among themselves. He expressed surprise that no attempts had been made by the English to explore the country from the Indian side. The same opinion had been expressed by other scientific Russian geographers.

Mr. SETON-KARR said he quite agreed with Colonel Yule that on this subject the critics were almost on a par with the author and reader of the paper, for all their knowledge must have been obtained at second-hand. He would be glad if some one would enlighten him on one or two points. For instance, the word, "Spin" was used. If he recollected rightly, in one of Dr. Bellew's books there was an account of the Spin Tarins, and the Zarrins. He apprehended that the word "Spin" must be the same in both instances. He also wished to know if any one could state whether the population of Kafiristan was decreasing. He imagined that a body of men shut in and separated from all intercourse with the outer world would decrease rather than increase. The prominent remark, however, which occurred to him when listening to the paper, was that when Englishmen invaded a country, officers were always found who, in spite of campaigns and sieges, would attend to the pursuits of science and antiquities, and no doubt, as time went on, a detailed account of this secluded region would be obtained. He had heard it suggested that Kafiristan would be rather a good recruiting-ground for our troops, and that it would be quite possible to form a troop of irregular Kafirs; but in a political point of view it would



be difficult for any officer of the Indian army to go to Kafiristan and enrol men to serve under the English flag.

MR. TRELAWNY SAUNDERS said it was desirable that the situation of Kafiristan should be more generally understood. On the north it included a part of the great Hindu Kush, which begins on the east where the Indus basin is divided from the Lake Lob basin on the one side, and the Oxus basin on the other, and terminates just beyond the Bamian Pass. The mountains bounding Kafiristan on the south were a portion of the same range which bounds Kashmir on the south, that is, they form the western extremity of the Outer Himalaya, Kashmir being situated between the Inner and Outer ranges of the Himalaya. Both ranges were cut through by the great gorge of the Indus, and passing on, the Outer range is formed by the culminating summit of the slope that comes up from the plain to Peshawur; while the Inner range is prolonged on the west of the Indus by the mountains which rise from the south side of the Gilgit river. This extension of the Inner and Outer Himalaya on the west of the Indus is also cut through by the Kunar river. The intersection of the Himalaya by the Indus was only explored quite recently; and the passage of the Kunar range is still unknown. The upper part of the Chitral valley had been reached, but the gorge through which the river passed out of it never had been. The culminating summit of the range on the south of the Gilgit river is quite distinct from the summit of the slope from the plain of Peshawur. Though the members of the Trigonometrical Survey had not been able to penetrate into Kafiristan, they had been able to determine the longitudes, latitudes, and altitudes of a great number of peaks, and to show that the outer ranges of the country ran up to 15,000 or 16,000 feet rapidly from a base which was only 2000 feet, or 1900 feet at Jalálabad. The passes must, therefore, be very difficult, and the inaccessibility of the highlands to hostile forces is thus explained. The rivers Kunar, Kabul, and Panjshir form almost a complete circle around Kafiristan. The only European who had got near Kafiristan on the north side was Captain Wood, who discovered the source of the Oxus. When he was visiting the lapis-lazuli mines he heard of the Kafirs, and of the terror with which they were regarded by the Mahommedans of Badakhshan. There were some curious circumstances in connection with the names of the country. Besides the abusive name which the Mahommedans gave it, it was called Wamastan, a word which it was difficult to understand. It was also known as Katur; and to this day one of the divisions of Kafiristan was called Katur, which was identical with Katawar. The chief of Chitral, who was of the same race as the Kafirs, also called himself the Shah Katur. Other points of interest connected with this name, as well as with the political, religious, and ethnical branches of the subject, could not then be noticed for want of time.

The CHAIRMAN (Sir Henry Rawlinson) said that Elphinstone, as Mr. Cust had stated, was the first person in modern times to bring the Kafirs into notice. His account was not merely hearsay gossip, for he sent a native officer, who was specially qualified for the mission, into the country to examine into the history of the Kafirs, and he thus obtained a very valuable and accurate report. A singular incident connected with this report was the very remarkable forgery which was founded upon it, and which for a long time imposed upon the geographical world of Europe, and was at last exploded by the Geographical Society. This was an account of a journey from Kashmir to the Russian frontier, stated to have been performed by a German traveller, published in Russia as an authentic narrative in the year 1806. The point which really mystified all geographers was the extraordinary and apparently accurate account that was given of Kafiristan, not only describing the manners of the people but also giving many of the native words. The traveller mentioned one temple which he said was called Imra Umra—the house of God. When he (the Chairman) learned

that ten or twelve years afterwards Mullah Najib found the same names in the same country, he did not understand it, and confessed that he thought that there must be some foundation for the account which had been given, but ultimately, on further investigation, he discovered that there was a mystification of dates. Elphinstone's book was published in 1814, and the so-called travels, which were stated to have been published in 1806, must in reality have been concocted after that date, and the evidence which appeared to be so convincing was merely a copy of Elphinstone's report on the Kafirs. With regard to the subject of the paper, he (the Chairman) might say that he had an advantage over some of those who had addressed the Meeting, because he had seen numbers of Kafirs and conversed with them. During the three months which he passed in Kabul forty years ago, he repeatedly saw them, and the most beautiful Oriental lady that he ever saw was a Kafir slave. She was the only lady that he had ever met with who, by loosening her golden hair, could cover herself completely from head to foot as with a screen. Certainly the appearance of the people did give a rather strong presumption of Greek origin; but it was well known that historically there could not be any real ethnic relation. It was just possible that as Greek art gave a certain tone to Indian art, so the manners and customs of the Greek colony which existed for 300 or 400 years in the Hindu Kush might have given a certain tone to the manners and even the physical type of the Kafirs. Still, the language of the people showed clearly that they were an old Aryan tribe, similar to some twenty other tribes in those mountains. The Afghans themselves were nothing more in their origin than one of those tribes, just the same as the Shinwaris and many others, every one of which had a separate dialect and a separate history. Of course it was interesting to investigate the antiquities of the Kafirs, but probably not more so than to investigate the history of any of the other tribes in the mountains—with this single exception, that their type was better than those of most of the tribes around; and in the second place, the kernel of the race had never adopted the Mahommedan religion: they were still pagans. Major Biddulph, who had been resident for many years on the frontier, and who was invited to visit the Kafirs by two special deputations, had recently published in India a book\* in which he gave very full details of their language their religion, their manners, their history, and everything except the geography of the country, which he did not venture to touch upon, as he only saw it from a distance. Any gentleman who took an interest in the subject might refer to his chapter on the Siah Posh Kafirs, which was full of interest, and particularly mentioned the wonderful horns which the ladies wore as a headdress. He said:† "The Bushgáli women have a curious headdress consisting of a sort of black cap with lappets, and two horns about a foot long, made of wood wrapped round with black cloth and fixed to the cap. This curious fashion does not seem to have been always confined to those tribes, or it may be that they were more widely spread than at present. The Chinese traveller, Sung-Yun (writing in about 520 A.D.), of the Ye-tha, who must have been the people of Sirikol or Hunza, says, 'The ladies cover their heads, using horns, from which hang down veils all round.'" Major Biddulph showed that this very peculiar headdress was noticed also by the Chinese traveller Hwen Tshang in the seventh century, and was still retained. He also gave an account of another curious custom. He said: "The Siah Posh are exceedingly fond of dancing, but their mode differs considerably from that of the tribes to the eastward. Instead of only one or two performers, everybody present, women as well as men, join in the dance together. A village dance was held before me—a wild and strange exhibition—the men brandished axes, clubs,

\* 'Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh.' By Major J. Biddulph, B.S.C., Political Officer at Gilgit. Calcutta, 1880.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 129.

and guns which they fired off at intervals, amidst a chorus of whoops and shrill whistles. At times the whole would lock arms by pairs and revolve backwards and forwards in a grotesque waltz, or following in order wind round and round in figures of 8. Sometimes all would break off and dance singly, setting first to one and then to another in a sort of wild jig, or, forming in lines with locked arms, advance and retreat in steps like the Koles of Chota Nagpore. The music consisted of two drums and a feeble flute made of bamboo. On the death of a man, his corpse is carried round the village in procession for several days before being finally disposed of, the attendants dancing round it."\* He quoted these as specimens of Major Biddulph's report, which contained a very long account of the manners and customs of the Kafirs. It had been noticed that the general country was called Wamastan. He suspected that the word "Wam" was simply the Sanskrit *wan*, a jungle, and that the word meant the jungle country. But the natives themselves divided it into three tribes, the Rungal, the Waigal, and the Bushgal—*gal* being their name for a country. Each of the tribes had many subdivisions. Then, again, the Kamuz and the Kamtuz were spoken of, which meant Upper and Lower Kam. Major Biddulph had alluded to the Dehgáns, which was a word equivalent to Tajik, meaning a villager, and Colonel Yule might remember that Marco Polo spoke of the Dehgáns at Kunduz, and that the name referred to a separate country; but it was merely the Tajiks who still retained the name of Dehgáns to the present day. He would not discuss the question of the Kafir religion, but it was fully treated by Major Biddulph, who showed distinctly that it was a sort of bastard Brahminism. Indra and Manu were the two great gods, but, curiously enough, the people did not know that they were connected with Brahminism, and confounded Manu with the prophet Mani, whose disciples, the Manichæans, were prevalent in Central Asia: and "Indra" they called "Imbra." Major Biddulph gave the names of some twenty gods, and described many of them. He said: "There seem to be grounds for supposing that the religion of the Siah Posh is a crude form of the ancient Vedic. One Supreme Being is worshipped under the name of Imbra, and next to Imbra in importance is the prophet Mani. He is called the son of Imbra, and once lived on earth, and he mediates with Imbra on behalf of men. Stones are set up as emblems of Imbra, but carved idols are not used. These two names cannot but suggest the Indra and Manu of the Brahmins. Below them in rank are a whole host of deities, whose number is stated at 18,000, evidently an arbitrary number. Some of these have particular functions as in Greek mythology, but they are acknowledged to have once been mortals, who were deified after death. First in importance is Gej, who is spoken of as a great chief who fought with the prophet Ali, and commenced the feud between the Siah Posh and the Mahommedans, which has continued ever since. Next comes Bagej, the god of rivers, who also has power over flocks and herds. Sacrifices to Bagej are made by the waterside, and the heads of the victims after being burnt with fire are thrown into the stream. Of the others, the most important are Proozi, Dooji, Poorateh (Parbati?), Arum, Marer, Disni, Kroomai, Saranji, and Wir. It is probable that the names of these inferior deities differ among the different tribes, and many of them must be tribal heroes only recognised by particular tribes."†—Major Biddulph had also found a great number of antiquities, including a good, rock-cut figure of Buddha seen near Gilgit, and also an inscription in the old Sanskrit of the third century. The sculpture was apparently one of the figures mentioned by the Buddhist pilgrims. Some surprise had been expressed that more advantage had not been taken of the Kafirs by England in our political relations with

\* *Op. cit.*, p. 133.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 130.



Afghanistan; but the reason of that was the excessive jealousy with which the Afghans had ever viewed any connection between the English and the Kafirs. During the time that he (the Chairman) was at Kabul with Sir William McNaghten, a wish was expressed on many occasions to open up relations with the Kafirs, but the Afghans showed such jealousy (supposing it could only be done through England mistrusting them), that the English authorities were unwilling to touch such a very tender subject. The Kafirs, however, used to visit us at Kabul, and were always asking the English to go into their country. Major Biddulph mentioned that two deputations came to invite him; and on the same day that Colonel Tanner left the Chugáni a deputation arrived to invite him into Kafiristan. He trusted that the time might come when the country would be visited by Englishmen. He did not think that such a journey was necessarily dependent on any occupation of Afghanistan, but thought an officer might be permitted by the Government to travel from Peshawur into Kafiristan. If invited by the Kafirs he did not see that there was any reason against it, either political or personal. He should recommend the traveller to keep entirely on the north side of the Kabul river, to go by the entrance of the Swat valley to Dir, then cross into the Chitral valley, and make straight up one of the passes into Kafiristan. He believed that might be done by an active, energetic, enterprising young officer such as Captain Gill, who was always ready for any expedition of the sort; and no doubt it could be accomplished with perfect success. The whole of the tribes were of very considerable interest, if not of any great political importance. Geographically speaking, he was afraid that the Meeting had not learned much. The geography of the country required a very different sort of study and application from that which could be given to it by a traveller who had the means only of collecting on the borders traits of the manners and customs of the inhabitants.



